

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

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WHA Press Guidance  
April 15, 2002

RELEASED IN FULL

**VENEZUELA: AUTHORIZED DEPARTURE OF NON-ESSENTIAL  
AMERICAN EMPLOYEES AND DEPENDENTS**

Q: Are U.S. Embassy employees in Venezuela being evacuated?

**A: IN LIGHT OF THE CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION AND  
POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE IN VENEZUELA, THE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS APPROVED AUTHORIZED  
DEPARTURE FOR NON-EMERGENCY AMERICAN EMPLOYEES  
AND FOR ANY OFFICIAL DEPENDENTS WHO CHOOSE TO  
LEAVE. THIS IS A VOLUNTARY MEASURE AND OFFERS  
THESE EMPLOYEES THE CHOICE TO DEPART OR REMAIN.**

**THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH AMERICANS  
TRAVELING OR RESIDING IN VENEZUELA VIA ITS WARDEN  
NETWORK AND WILL ASSIST ANY PRIVATE AMERICANS  
WISHING TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.**